MDOT
Michigan Department of Transportation

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 6, 1999

TO: Region Engineers
Region Associate Engineers - Delivery
Region Construction Engineers
Region Materials Supervisors/Engineers
TSC Managers
Resident/Project Engineers

FROM: C. Thomas Maki
Chief Operations Officer

Gary D. Taylor
Chief Engineer/Deputy Director
Bureau of Highway Technical Services

SUBJECT: Bureau of Highway Instructional Memorandum 1999-12
Special Provision Process Upgrade

In the year since EOC approved the current special provision process there have been over 1200 special provisions approved for use. The majority of these were processed during the first two quarters of the fiscal year and fully a third were duplicates covering less than twenty work items. Compounding the problem, the number of requests for additions and revisions to the frequently used special provision list during this peak letting time resulted in an increase in the number of addendums needed to insert the most current versions and to correct mistakes in compiling documents for proposals.

Considering the constraints of the compressed letting schedule to which MDOT is committed and the size of the program to be let during that time, it is necessary to reduce the cycle time for review and approval of special provisions and decrease the number of addendums due to special provision changes. Four areas have been identified in which improvements can be made. These include frequently used special provisions, duplicate provisions for similar work, established materials or method provisions, and using previously approved provisions as a starting point for project specific situations. The following guidelines will be applied by the department when processing special provisions. The cooperation of MDOT and consultant designers in following this process will substantially reduce the number of provisions in the system and will improve the overall development and delivery process.

1.) Frequently Used Special Provisions - Frequently used special provisions (FUSP) are those which have been, and will continue to be, used often enough that they warrant spending the time to fine tune them based on experience. They are intended to be

used without revision to cover certain items of work, materials, or construction methods not addressed by the standard specifications.

FUSP must be established or revised prior to August of each year in order to be incorporated into projects for the following construction season. The Engineer of Specs and Estimates (Design Division), and the Engineer of Specifications (Construction and Technology Division), will coordinate all requests for additions or revisions to the FUSP list. Only changes necessitated by the following issues will be made to FUSP during the first two quarters of the fiscal year. Under no circumstances will addendums be issued to projects after advertising in order to insert a revised FUSP, with the following exceptions:

- ✔ Department policy changes
- ✔ Health and safety issues
- ✔ Regulatory changes
- ✔ Documented materials or construction defects

2.) Template Special Provisions -These are special provisions developed from dozens of duplicate provisions approved for use over the past three years. In order to provide continuity in the specifications for similar work and to make more efficient use of the review and approval process, designers are asked to use these special provisions whenever applicable. Included with each provision is a brief description of how and when it is to be used. Examples are Roadway Grading and Approach Grading.

The description, materials, construction methods, and measurement and payment sections of these special provisions have, in most cases, been standardized with only limited need for project specific information. The designer is responsible for adding this project specific information prior to submitting the provision for review and approval.

When used within the guidelines, these special provisions will be exempt from the requirement for two staff engineers to review and approve. Since the format and general content has been established, only one staff engineer will review the project specific portion of the special provision. This will shorten the approval time for these special provisions.

3.) Recommended Special Provisions - These special provisions have been developed for very specific applications of either materials or construction methods and are the preferred specification. Unless there is a project specific reason to override the preferred materials or methods, these special provisions are to be inserted as needed in the proposals. These provisions will be converted to FUSP if experience shows this status is warranted. Examples are Flowable Fill and Construction of Drilled Shaft Foundations for Strain Poles, Light Towers, Soundwalls, and Cantilever Signs.

4.) Sample Approved Special Provisions - When it is necessary to include a special provision in a project, designers are asked to use a previously approved provision or

select one as a first draft. As new special provisions are approved for use, the best examples will be posted for revision or reuse.

These documents are currently available on the Design server (FUSP) or through the NT system on the specification computer (ruszkowskij2). Instructions for accessing both of these systems are attached. These documents will be made available on the Bulletin Board. If there are any questions or problems encountered in accessing either of these systems, contact the Specs and Estimates Unit at 517-373-0067, or the Specifications Office at 517-322-5667 for assistance.

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Chief Operation Officer

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Bureau of Highway Technical Services

Attachments
Subject Index: Special Provisions
BOHTS:JAR:jp

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